CONSUMER TIME

ARMENIAN FOODLORE COMES TO AMERICA

NETWORK: NBC DATE: February 3, 1945

ORIGIN: WRC- PICK UP FROM KPO SAN FRANCISCO TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM- EWT

(Produced by the Office of Marketing Services of the War Food Administration, this script is for reference only and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than eleven years in the interest of consumers.)

-oOo-

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the War Food Administration.

5. FREYMAN: Why, Johnny...isn't that a copy of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat under your arm?

6. JOHN: That's what it is, Mrs. Freyman. What's more appropriate, on the day that we're going to hear from George Mardikian, the world-famous San Francisco chef. You know his two California restaurants are named in honor of Omar Khayyam.

7. FREYMAN: Yes, I've heard about them. Mr. Mardikian came to this country when he was a young man, didn't he?

8. JOHN: He was about twenty-five, I believe. And he'd been through the horrible Near Eastern battles of the first World War...so America looked mighty good to him.

9. FREYMAN: My...you seem to know quite a bit about Mr. Mardikian.

10. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

10. JOHN: I've only touched the surface, Mrs. Freyman. For instance, when Mardikian arrived here, he found people in America happy and smiling...for years in his native Armenia, he hadn't seen people laughing and playing, so he thought we were crazy. But in a very short time he decided..."These Americans aren't crazy...they are right. It's right to be happy...you feel better...you make the other fellow feel better. I'm going to be a happy American; no more thinking sad thoughts, making sad music, dwelling on the woes of our people". So today, Mr. Mardikian is a happy American...he's a smiling chef...he can prepare the most delectable dishes you ever tasted. When it comes to food... he's a poet.

11. FREYMAN: Why, Johnny, now you're getting poetic. But I'm hungry to hear about this poetry in food from George Mardikian himself.

ENGINEER: WATCH SWITCH COMING UP AT 12:16:30 PM- EWT (9:16:30 AM- PWT)... CUE IS UNDERLINED.

12. JOHN: And it's yours for the asking, Mrs. Freyman. CONSUMER TIME takes you to San Francisco.

(SWITCH TO SAN FRANCISCO 9:16:30)

13. SCHACHT: Greetings, CONSUMER TIMERS everywhere. This is Henry Schacht, commenting that we'll all be hungry, and not just for the poetic side of food, when George Mardikian gets through talking. (IDENTIFIES PARTICIPANTS)

14. WOMAN: (SLIGHTLY DISTRESSED) But what good will it do to get so hungry for these wonderful dishes? So many foods are rationed, or out of season. You know, Mr. Mardikian...we can't cook like we did before the war.

15. MARDIKIAN: Will you listen to her, Henry. She says "we can't cook like we did before the war". Well, I say, maybe that's good, Mrs. Cleve. Now you American women will use some of your ingenuity in the kitchen.

16. WOMAN: Ingenuity doesn't equal red points, Mr. Mardikian.

17. MARDIKIAN: Aah! But it can stretch them plenty.

18. SCHACHT: Don't look so downcast, Mrs. Cleve. Just the other day he told me that American women have a chance to become famous for their cooking.

19. MARDIKIAN: And I also told Henry that perhaps American husbands are the reason why American women haven't tried more new and unusual dishes.

20. WOMAN: I agree with that. Men are only interested in meat and potatoes.

21. SCHACHT: Now, Mrs. Cleve...George merely said that we're a little lax on the compliments after our wives have spent hours fixing what they thought was a good dinner.

22. MARDIKIAN: Well, Henry, did you tell your wife what a good dinner she fed you last night?

23. SCHACHT: Let me see....(HEM AND HAW)

24. MARDIKIAN: I thought so!

25. WOMAN: See? That's why we don't try a lot of fancy dishes...we're sure of the old standbys.

26. MARDIKIAN: I think it's high time Mrs. Cleve, that you and all the other housewives of this great nation get together and pull a few fast ones on these forgetful husbands. Now I have a lot of ideas for you Mrs. Cleve.

27. SCHACHT: Say, George, before you get to the recipe stage...tell the folks about your first experiences with American potato salad.

28. MARDIKIAN: You mean when I came to this country in 1922 and took the train to San Francisco?

29. SCHACHT: That's right...as I remember, it was in July...about the hottest time of the year to cross the country.

30. MARDIKIAN: And I got on one of those trains that took eight days to get here. People could see that I didn't speak English because I was labeled with a tag showing my name and destination. I had enough money so I could eat in the dining car. But I couldn't order in English. However I knew a little French, so I made out the words "potato salad" on the menu, because it was written in French...and the words were practically the same in Armenian. So I took a chance and ordered it for my first dinner. The next day I was presented with the same menu. Again I ordered potato salad...this went on for eight days and it was bad potato salad, too...really terrible potato salad. Right then and there, I resolved that some day when I got the opportunity, I was going to serve the Americans the best potato salad in the world.

31. SCHACHT: And did you?

32. MARDIKIAN: Absolutely. I serve potato salad at outstanding functions. For buffet luncheons, I use a large plateful as the table center piece, with the message of the day written on it in colored mayonnaise. There's an idea for you, Mrs. Cleve.

33. WOMAN: Why I'd never thought of it. Potato salad is ideal for a Sunday night supper....and for the kids' parties.

34. MARDIKIAN: For grown-up parties, too. Use the potato salad recipe I'll give you after the broadcast and you'll never go wrong.

35. WOMAN: Fine. I'll try it tomorrow. You don't know how anxious we are, Mr. Mardikian, to hear about new dishes, and new ways to prepare old standbys.

36. MARDIKIAN: I'm very glad to know that...because I believe that one of the results of the present war is that it forced the American woman to forget the can opener and think about what to do with the simplest foods...especially fruits, vegetables and eggs. I can tell you some wonderful egg dishes...and you don't have to use a lot of fancy seasonings to get good results.

37. WOMAN: But don't you use all sorts of special spices that you brought to this country, Mr. Mardikian?

38. MARDIKIAN: I use only the things I find here in America...the same seasonings that every housewife can use. The natural flavors of foods, blended in unusual and delicious combinations, are what make so many people think my dishes have rare and exotic seasonings in them. Believe it or not, I'm opposed to seasonings. I use salt and pepper, oregano, dried mint, taragon, and very little garlic.

39. WOMAN: And that's all? But why does your food taste so wonderful. I could never get the results you do.

40. MARDIKIAN: You're wrong. You American women can have your own cuisine, by combining the best of the cooking of other nationalities. And it doesn't have to be developed by chefs, either. It can be developed by housewives who will grow to love their own kitchens and prefer their own creations to the tin can and can opener. In my new cookbook, I have introduced the type of cuisine that Armenians have lived on for centuries in spite of little food and less money. My dishes are authentic Armenian dishes, prepared in the Armenian manner, but they are seasoned for the taste of this country.

41. SCHACHT: Don't let George be too modest, Mrs. Cleve. Those recipes of his represent twenty years of research and experiments in many parts of the world.

42. MARDIKIAN: You do bring back memories, Henry...of Constantinople and Ashji Mugurdich. I worked for six dollars a week in Alexandria, Egypt, just so I could be near Mugurdich. He was a great chef in the palaces of the sultans and pashas in Constantinople. And I have secured some of my most prized recipes from the Armenian Monastery on Saint Lazarus Island. This monastery was the printing shop for the old Venetian Government...and it has one of the greatest collections of ancient manuscripts. Some of them weigh hundreds of pounds and require two or three monks to lift them. They have the same beautiful and artistic colorings as Armenian and Oriental rugs. I went through these musty old manuscripts and that's how I learned that the Armenian cuisine goes back 3,900 years.

43. WOMAN: It sounds fascinating...all this delving into old manuscripts for recipes. Tell me, Mr. Mardikian, what kind of recipes did you find?

44. MARDIKIAN: I found one for (BRIEFLY MENTION SEVERAL DISHES FOUND IN MANUSCRIPTS...ABOUT TWO SENTENCES ON EACH.)

45. WOMAN: My...that sounds like exciting food.

46. MARDIKIAN: It is. But let's forget about the old Armenian cuisine and start building for the future American cuisine.

47. WOMAN: All right. Where do you think we should begin?

48. MARDIKIAN: For one thing, I don't believe in a lot of complicated blendings of seasoning or ingredients that disguise bad meat or bad cooking. My idea of a bad cook is one who boils the flavor out of meat and then pours strong sauce over it to hide her failure. A truly good cook makes the most of each food's natural flavor. You agree, Mrs. Cleve?

49. WOMAN: Of course. But with some of these low-point meats, I don't have too much luck with flavor, because I have to cook them so long.

[illegible] I can do bring back memories, Henry...of Constantinople and [illegible] Imperatice. I worked for six dollars a week in flower [illegible], Egypt. Just so I could be near Imperatice. He was a [illegible] in the palaces of the [illegible] and pashas in Constantinople. [illegible] received some of my most prized presents [illegible] on Saint Isaacs Point [illegible] the old Venetian [illegible] legions of [illegible] pounds and [illegible] [illegible] beautiful and [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] think?

[illegible] I found [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the future [illegible]

[illegible] this [illegible] I [illegible]

[illegible] the flower [illegible] to hide her [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

50. MARDIKIAN: Here's something to remember, then. Roasting and baking foods is the secret for sealing in the natural flavor, as the Armenians learned centuries ago. And sealing in flavor also preserves the nourishing vitamins and health-giving values of food.

51. WOMAN: Well, I know about roasting meat and baking cakes...but where can I find a piece of beef for roasting or the sugar for cakes?

52. MARDIKIAN: I'm not just talking about cooking meats and pastries. You can bake vegetables too, you know. You don't always have to boil them. There's my Victory Garden Meal...prepared by stuffing vegetables.

53. WOMAN: Say, that sounds delicious...and attractive, too.

54. MARDIKIAN: That's also very important...serving meals that are colorful and look enticing on the table. And here's something else to keep in mind. Make eating a ceremony instead of just a habit. Whether it's the family you're feeding, or guests...whether you're two or ten...there is no better time to enjoy the company of your family or your friends than during a well-planned meal. And there's no better inspiration for the cook than an appreciative audience.

55. SCHACHT: Say, George, I hope you're going to tell us about some of the famous lamb dishes...lamb is one of my favorites.

56. MARDIKIAN: Mine too, especially Kouzou Kzartma...lamb shanks and what's more ...they are <u>point free</u>.

57. WOMAN: Point free, did you say? Can you give me that recipe, too?

58. MARDIKIAN: It's very simple. Now, just to give you an idea (DESCRIBE PREPARATION BRIEFLY, IN ABOUT 20 SECONDS)

59. WOMAN: Now how am I going to remember all that?

60. MARDIKIAN: You don't have to. It's all written down here in the collection I have for you.

61. WOMAN: Oh that's wonderful Mr. Mardikian. You know, there's something else I'd like to have...if it isn't giving away any of your cooking secrets. Could you tell us about a few of your fancy dishes... like that Gregorian cocktail...and the dishes you fix with grape leaves?

62. MARDIKIAN: They aren't secret recipes, Mrs. Cleve...they're in this special collection, too and we're giving it to all CONSUMER TIME listeners. The Gregorian cocktail is made with raw vegetables...

63. SCHACHT: Why, the name "Gregorian cocktail", George?

64. MARDIKIAN: (EXPLAIN BRIEFLY THAT IT'S NAMED AFTER ARMENIAN GREGORIAN CHRISTIAN CHURCH, EATEN DURING MEATLESS LENTEN SEASON WHICH LASTS FOR 40 DAYS, ETC.)

65. WOMAN: And what about those dishes with grape leaves? Except I don't know where I'd find grape leaves this time of the year.

66. MARDIKIAN: Well, you can use either grape leaves or cabbage in a dolma.

67. WOMAN: "Dolma"...what does that mean?

68. MARDIKIAN: Oh, it's just the Armenian word for "stuffed". Incidentally this dish dates back to the time of Noah's Ark. You see, when the floods subsided at Mt. Ararat, Noah got off the ark in Armenia and settled in Nakhichevan, which means "first stop". The first greens they could get were grape leaves.

69. SCHACHT: But why grape leaves, George...

70. MARDIKIAN: Everyone always asks that question. In vineyard country after a draught or flood, the first plant to sprout leaves will be the grapevine. Nakhichevan, has the distinction of having the oldest vineyards in the world. And these stuffed grape leaves, or dolmas using squash, or tomatoes or eggplant, have a lot of uses...they can be served as an appetizer, a salad or cold entree. And they don't require any rationed foods.

71. WOMAN: Those are the dishes I need to know about...the ones that call for unrationed foods.

72. MARDIKIAN: Then you'll get some nice surprises in this recipe collection I'm giving you. And by the way, Mrs. Cleve, you'll notice that I call for olive oil in many of these recipes.

73. WOMAN: But olive oil is a little expensive for general use, Mr. Mardikian We have to watch our food budget you know.

74. MARDIKIAN: Well, you can use vegetable oils instead of olive oil. I find peanut oil a very good substitute.

Now another important unrationed food I'd like to talk about is the egg. In some places, I hear folks saying that eggs are hard to get. Well, I understand that in a month or so we may have another egg flood like we had last year. But now, the hens are still on their winter vacation. Anyway, you can do more with eggs than just fry, boil or scramble them. In Armenia, ceremonial soups are never served without the lemon-egg dressing. You see, long before Christianity, the Hebrews, Assyrains, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Greeks and Armenians and all the people living in the cradle of civilization used eggs on occasions of pomp and ceremony. To them the egg symbolized the Universe... and they presented eggs to their gods as offerings.

75. WOMAN: That must be where we got our custom of egg hunts at Easter.

76. MARDIKIAN: You're right. But let me tell you our legend about eggs. The outer shell of the egg represents the limitless sky, and the inner skin the air. The white of the egg was the waters and the yolk the earth. And starting early in the Christian era, the symbol of coloring eggs at Easter time meant that the salvation of the world was bought with the blood of Christ. So, you see, all these legends about food are part of our history.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

77. WOMAN: You make food sound so much more glamorous than it seems when I go shopping or get dinner.

78. MARDIKIAN: Well, see if these recipes don't help you put a little more glamor in the food you serve your family. And Henry...you take this home to your wife. Then be sure to hand out plenty of compliments.

ENGINEER: WATCH FOR SWITCH COMING UP AT 9:28 AM- PWT - (12:28 PM- EWT).

79. SCHACHT: O.K., O.K. For myself, Mrs. Cleve, Johnny, Mrs. Freyman and CONSUMER TIME listeners, we thank you George Mardikian for bringing Armenian foodlore to America, and with it, your art of bringing poetry into the kitchen. This is Henry Schacht in San Francisco. We return CONSUMER TIME to Washington, D. C.

(SWITCH TO WASHINGTON, D. C. - 9:28 AM- PWT (12:28 PM- EWT)

80. FREYMAN: I'm breathless from hunger, Johnny. And our listeners must be, too. So let's tell them just how they can get the collection of recipes which George Mardikian has selected especially for them. And then we'll go searching for a lamb shank to make that wonderful dish Mr. Mardikian mentioned. Holly Wright?

81. WRIGHT: Friends...our guest today, the famous San Francisco Chef, has prepared especially for CONSUMER TIME listeners, a helpful leaflet of his own interesting and unusual recipes. This leaflet... entitled "George Mardikian's Favorite Recipes", is yours free, when you write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. You'll enjoy making the chef's tasty potato salad...or stuffed cabbage leaves...the delicious salad dressing, known as "Omar's Dressing" ...and many others. They're easy and economical to prepare. So ...send for your free copy of "George Mardikian's Favorite Recipes" compiled especially for CONSUMER TIME listeners. Simply write the two words "Favorite Recipes" on a post card, include your name, address, and the name of the station to which you are listening. Send it to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. That's "Favorite Recipes", CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C.

82. FREYMAN: Next week on CONSUMER TIME, we're going to tell a story important to every homemaker.

83. JOHN: We're going to tell about how Government-bought foods are released to consumers.

84. FREYMAN: So listen again next week...for another edition of....

85. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...MONEY IN TILL

86. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

87. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

88. JOHN: How your money buys a living in wartime!

89. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

90. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Dorothea Hansen, was presented by the War Food Administration through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. This broadcast period for CONSUMER TIME has been made available as a public service.

This is the National Broadcasting Company.